Memorandum of Agreement with the CGHS, the main features of which are that they will charge only package rates fixed for the procedure, etc. and provide cashless treatment to the pensioners and Ex-MPs etc.

Private hospitals not empanelled with CGHS are not obliged to charge at CGHS package rates.

No incident of over overcharging by empanelled private hospitals has come to the notice of CGHS.

Upgradation of medical colleges in Madhya Pradesh

†1314. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposals for upgradation of Under Graduate (UG) and Post Graduate (PG) medical colleges of Bhopal, Indore, Rewa are pending with his Ministry since 2007; and

(b) if so, the action being taken thereon and by when these would be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Under a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Strengthening and Upgradation of State Government Medical Colleges" during Eleventh Five Year Plan, proposals from various State Government Medical Colleges including Madhya Pradesh have been received for starting/ increase of seats in postgraduate courses. The funds are envisaged to be allocated to the medical colleges after the finalization of the scheme.

Anomaly in grade pay of pharmacists

1315. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pharmacists are still in Pay Band (PB) I grade whereas the employees of similar expertise are placed far above in PB-II or PB-III;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any proposal in the Ministry to recommend PB-II in case of pharmacists to remove this gross anomaly and injustice; and

(d) by when such a proposal will be sent to the Department of Personnel and Training (DOPT) for consideration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI S. GANDHISELVAN): (a) and (b) No, the pharmacists in Central Government have been

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

placed at grade pay of Rs.2800 in pay band PB-1 corresponding to their pre-revised pay scale of Rs.4500-7000/- on the basis of qualification and their duties and responsibilities.

(c) and (d) While approving the Report of the Sixth Central Pay Commission, the Government referred the matter related to the demands made in regard to pay scales of certain common category posts including pharmacists to a Fast Track Committee. On the basis of recommendation of the Committee the entry grade of pharmacists in Central Government has been kept at grade pay of Rs.2800 in pay band PB-1 and the same will be upgraded to the next higher grade having grade pay of Rs.4200 in pay band PB-2 on non-functional basis after 2 years of service in the grade pay of Rs.2800.

Common prescription medicines under scanner

1316. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some popular and widely used medicines given for cold and pain are under Government scanner on concesus raised about their adverse reactions; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Concerns expressed by Parliamentarians and media about continued marketing of certain drug formulations like nimesulide, phenylpropanolamine etc. which have been withdrawn/ restricted in some other countries have been taken note of by the Government.

Public health spending

1317. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the recent study conducted by WHO whose findings reveal that India ranks 171 out of the 175 countries in the world in public health spending;

(b) whether there has been no increase in public health spending over the last few years, making the country overtly dependent on private sector; and

(c) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to increase and efficiently utilize the health budget for enhancing public healthcare and tackling existing epidemics and new diseases such as H1N1 flu etc.?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) According to World Health Organization (WHO) no study has been conducted in the recent past, which ranks the countries by public health spending.

(b) and (c) As per the National Health Accounts India 2004-05 (with provisional estimates from 2005-06 to 2008-09), public spending on health in the country for the last 3 years is estimated as follows: